

REMARKS BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE
DINNER IN HONOUR OF HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. KAKUEI TANAKA, PRIME MINISTER OF
JAPAN, AT SRI TAMAN, KUALA LUMPUR ON
12TH JANUARY, 1974

Mr Prime Minister, Excellencies, Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you, Mr Prime Minister, and to members of your party, the warm and cordial greetings of the Government and people of Malaysia.

We are happy to welcome you, Mr Prime Minister, not only as the distinguished leader of your country but also as a man of many and remarkable accomplishments. The vigour and energy which are associated with you, paralled in many ways with the dynamism and drive that have made Japan one of the world's leading economic powers.

I recall with pleasure, Mr Prime Minister, my various visits to your country. The last occasion was my meeting with you in July and I am delighted that you are now able to visit us. I have looked forward to this opportunity to renew and strengthen our personal contact, and also to reciprocate, in a small way, the many kindnesses accorded to me in the past by the Japanese Government.

I am only sorry, Mr Prime Minister, that this, your first visit to our country should be so brief. But I trust even in this limited time within the city of Kuala Lumpur, you would have captured something of the energy and vitality that is rapidly transforming our country and moving our people forward.

Mr Prime Minister.

There is little doubt that relations between Japan and Malaysia have always been cordial and friendly. After all, we share many things in common. Our ideals and aspirations for a stable, prosperous and peaceful world have been reflected in our bi-lateral co-operation in many fields. Japan is one of Malaysia's most important trading partners. The economic co-operation that exists between us has helped to bring our two countries closer together.

Together with our other friends, we consult on matters of common concern at various international forums. All these things

show that differences in size, in wealth and in influence, do not prevent two countries from pursuing relations based on mutual respect for each other's independence and interests, that are truly beneficial for both.

During your short stay, Mr Prime Minister, you will see, at first hand, some of the manifestations of the close economic links between our two countries. I am certain that the presence of Japan in Malaysia's economic life will increase as the tempo of our development becomes more rapid.

As you may be aware, Mr Prime Minister, we in Malaysia have only recently completed our mid-term review of the Second Malaysia Plan. Much progress has been made, but more still needs to be done before our economy is fully self-sustaining. In this effort, there is great scope for co-operation between us both at the governmental and non-governmental levels.

As I have said many times already, we welcome the participation of Japanese business and industrial interests in the economic life of this country. We would like to welcome them not as strangers but as friends, who will feel free to mix and move among us. We would like to see them not as an alien or an isolated group in our midst but as part of the general community. This, we feel, is the only way that an atmosphere of goodwill in their business dealings can be brought about. We would like to think that they are here not only as businessmen interested purely in profit but as partners who have a mutual interest in our development and our success. Profit is, of course, an important element in business. But there must also be an element of concern, of the desire to help, which itself, in the long run, constitutes good business. Without this element, the business relationship becomes sterile and may eventually turn sour.

It is in this same spirit that we also welcome the participation of the Japanese Government in our economic development. I have no doubt that with the accelerating pace of our development, Japan can have an increasingly important part to play in the coming years. We in Malaysia would like to see Japan play the role of a friend and co-operate with us on a basis of equality as true and constructive partners in development for mutual benefit.

I myself have often stated—and I am sure you would agree with me—that foreign aid should be granted sincerely without

strings. I believe strongly that in all joint projects there should be a spirit of compromise, of give-and-take, and a generous and sincere desire to help. Without being complacent, I think we can say that the record of co-operation between our two countries in the past has been good, and I should like here to express publicly our very deep appreciation of the assistance we have received from Japan. I am sure that we can co-operate even more fruitfully and constructively in the future and I look forward to greater efforts by both sides to bring this about.

Mr Prime Minister.

Here in Southeast Asia, there is still much that needs to be done to bring about an environment of lasting peace and security. There is a new mood of co-operation in our region. All countries who have interests in this part of the world should seize this opportunity to create a new and better climate of international relations, based on trust and goodwill. We in ASEAN have endeavoured, first amongst ourselves, to do this. The Kuala Lumpur Declaration which seeks to create a "Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality" in Southeast Asia is a manifestation of our commitment to our common future. But our approach is not inward-looking. There is a legitimate role for all to play in Southeast Asia and Japan in particular has an important and a natural role. It is in the interest of your country and the major countries of the world which have a stake in Southeast Asia, to work with ASEAN and through ASEAN, to strive for peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

What we are working for is a situation where the major powers will see their common interest in adopting policies which support the constructive indigenous efforts of the Southeast Asian countries themselves. We have known, from our own experience, Mr Prime Minister, that constructive co-operation between all countries, irrespective of their social systems, is not only desirable but possible. We must try to evolve the kind of enduring and mutually rewarding friendship and co-operation that will be of benefit to all.

The next two days, Mr Prime Minister, will provide us ample opportunity to exchange views on all these matters, freely and frankly. May I, therefore, conclude now by extending once more to you, Mr Prime Minister, and to the members of your party a very warm welcome to Malaysia. I hope also that, despite a

busy programme ahead, you will be able to have a relaxing and enjoyable stay in Kuala Lumpur.

May I now invite all present to join me in a toast to the good health of His Excellency Prime Minister Tanaka of Japan and the Government and people of Japan.